

# Spotlight

## Royal Crescent Mob presents range of diverse styles

By BRIAN SPRINGER  
Staff Writer

To many people, Royal Crescent Mob is only a name on one of Cat's Cradle's photocopied fliers. But this 5-year-old band from Columbus, Ohio, is one of the most interesting bands on the concert circuit. On its Sire records debut, *Spin the World*,

the Mob covers an astonishing range of styles, from the Beastie Boys-style rap of "Big Show," to the stinging rock of "Hungry," to the brutal funk that marks much of the album. Around 10 p.m. Thursday night, the Cradle will again be home to Royal Crescent Mob's own brand of eclectic dance music. The Mob was formed when singer

David Ellison and guitarist B (born Brian Emch) paid off four judges at a Columbus "Battle of the Bands." With the prize — free studio time — in hand, Ellison and B stole drummer Carlton Smith and bassist Harold "Happy" Chichester from rival bands, and they proceeded to record the six-song EP *Land of Sugar*. The record, a tribute to

Leroy "Sugar" Bonner of the Ohio Players (Ellison's neighbor), won the *Village Voice* award for EP of the year in 1986. New York's Celluloid Records released the Mob's next two efforts, *Omerta* and *Something New, Old, and Borrowed* (also called *SNOB*). The band received widespread critical ac-

claim, and Sire records' Seymour Stein signed the group after seeing its show at CBGB. Sire put the Mob in the studio with producers Richard Gottehrer (Blondie, Ramones) and Eric Calvi (Comeo, Duran Duran), and *Spin the World* was the result. Though *Spin the World* has received considerable college radio airplay, the

band has earned its reputation onstage. According to Ellison, "We've made our living for the last three years by being on tour constantly." In addition to headlining at clubs, the Mob has opened for an impressive list of acts, including the Replacements, Camper Van Beethoven and Fishbone.

In concert, the Mob displays a wild energy not unlike Fishbone. In addition to three albums worth of its own material, the band draws on a large repertoire of cover material. Few bands could hope to cover tunes by James Brown, AC/DC, Dead Kennedys and Howlin' Wolf within the same show. The Mob does it all.

One courageous critic summed up the band's basic sound in the *Village Voice*: "Scratches and power chords and funk-metal synthesis, that's the logical white response to Run-DMC's black response to Aerosmith's white response to the black blues." Royal Crescent Mob is difficult to classify, but it is even harder to resist.

In fact, the band's wide range of styles may be too much for some fans, Ellison said. "We've always thought we may be the band that will never fit anywhere."

At points, the Mob is like a hip, exciting version of the K-Tel compilations of years past. Certainly, though, the band's records sound lame compared to their live show.

A Mob show guarantees a good time. According to one critic, "If the Beastie Boys are your idea of what three funky white guys sound like, it's time to get ill to the equally zany but far less retarded sounds of the Royal Crescent Mob."

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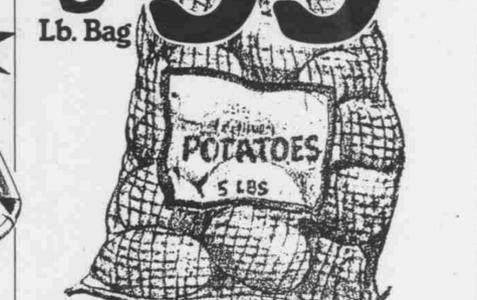
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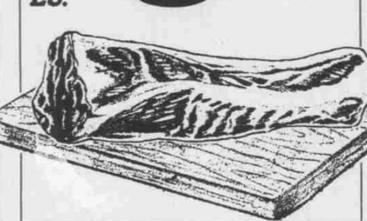
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editorial freedom. "Our news coverage is as fair and unbiased as it can possibly be. People have the right to be dissatisfied with an editor, but there are other recourses besides a recall that don't threaten editorial freedom."

Beall said the low percentage of minorities on the paper's staff also should be investigated. "I know of at least two minorities who have quit the Tar Heel because they didn't feel comfortable over there."

He refused to identify the minority staff members involved or what evidence he had that race was a factor in their decision to resign.

He said he didn't have minority-hiring figures from previous years to document his claim, arguing that the burden of proof was on the DTH.

Kebschull said, "Black students who have spoken with me about this say they do not feel discriminated against around the office, and more often than not students, both black and white, quit the staff because they are interested in trying out other activities on campus."

When staff applications are evaluated, editors have no knowledge of the applicant's race, she added.

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